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ADDRESSES

DELIVERED AT THE

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ON THE

OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION

OF THE

REV. WILLIAM H. ROBERTS, D. D.

AS PROFESSOR OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.



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1887.

I. THE CHARGE,

BY THE

REV. GEO. P. HAYS, D. D.

II. THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

THE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST AS IT AFFECTS THE OFFICE, WORK, AND
SPIRIT OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER,

BY THE

REV. WM. H. ROBERTS, D. D.

[Inaugural Services held December 14, 1886.]

THE CHARGE,

BY THE

REV. GEO. P. HAYS, D. D.

MY DEAR BROTHER.—Two years ago your lifeway and mine brought us in sight of each other. Since then our paths have been converging, until now our duties lie side by side. To me, this has been a matter of sincere pleasure. I congratulate you that so early in your life God and his Church have called you to this position, which is second to none in usefulness and importance. No profession is more noble than that of preaching. To make preachers is the best part of the preacher's work. In inducting you into this office of moulding ministers, my brethren of the Trustees have asked me to say a few words of counsel and encouragement to you.

Allow me, then, in the first place, to counsel you to study the science of teaching. Twelve years of the study and observation of the educational profession in this country, have left on my mind a profound impression that the great majority of those who fail in this work, fail not because they do not know enough, but because they lack skill in imparting and enforcing knowledge. More than two hundred and fifty thousand persons in this country are making their living as teachers in public schools, academies, colleges and professional schools, and

very many more would like to do so. The main difference between those who succeed and those who fail, is in the power of government and teaching. With such a force and such a field in this department of human enterprise, it is no wonder that as good talent as this country affords has devoted itself to the task of methodizing this science of education. I commend to you, therefore, the study of the works of the masters of the art of teaching. The art is not different in secular and religious education. Study well such works as "Wickersham's Methods of Instruction," "Trumbull's Teaching and Teachers," and especially "Dr. White's Elements of Pedagogy." Make yourself a master both of the theoretical science of teaching, and the practical art of the teacher.

It would be good for your students to study that same science and practice it as an art. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations," is that order of the Great Teacher, under whose commission they are to go forth. To do your work well, you and they will need to understand the science of mind and the modes of presenting truth so as to secure a favorable and permanent impression. You and they are to measure your effectiveness, not by the abstract truthfulness of what you say, but by your power to make your hearers hear it and heed it. The public want and will pay for the services of those who can instruct, entertain, persuade and control human hearts and consciences. That same public will neglect and willingly let starve those who, in their opinionated self conceit, insist that the public shall take their services whether they please people or not. The perfection of pulpit work is the happy combination of effective teaching and persuasive oratory. Mistakes in grammar or rhetoric are always faults, but inability to hold an audience is always a *dead failure*.

In the next place, as you are the Professor of Practical Theology, teach your students the things they will have to practice in their ministry. I do not believe that candidates for the ministry have ever in the history of the Church had better instruction than is now given in the Department of Dogmatical Theology, Old and New Testament Languages and Literature

and Church History. The weak place is in that department to which you are called. This does not apply so much to Homiletics as to the other studies. Young ministers are taught to preach sermons, but are they as faithfully taught to read the Scriptures, to read hymns and to pray? They are taught sacred rhetoric according to every book except the Bible, but are they as well taught in the matter of church organization and management? The Confession of Faith and the Catechisms are text-books, but the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline and the Directory for Worship ought also to be studied, that students may be familiar with the theory and application of these standards to every-day church life. In the General Assembly half a day can not be had to discuss the validity of Roman Catholic baptism, or the duty of the Church in regard to the Revised Version; but in last year's Minutes you publish standing orders for seven evenings, six forenoons and four afternoons of the ten working days of its sessions; and all these standing orders are about Boards, and Committees, and Sabbath-schools. Surely, if that is "the proportion of faith," your students ought to have ample instruction about the "good works" involved in all these boards and committees and schools.

Beyond these public affairs, your students will have pastoral duties and difficulties, and on these matters they will need your advice. They are pretty sure some time to have troubles about the choir. Please tell them how to avoid these, or manage them when they can not be avoided. They will have cranks outside of their churches, and nervous people inside, and you ought to give some helpful suggestions for such emergencies. They will have the sick to cheer and the mourner to comfort; teach them to be sons of consolation. Teach them how to deal with inquirers, their excuses, their doubts, their misapprehensions of Scripture, their mistakes about God, and the deceits of their own hearts. Instruct them how to deal with new converts; how to lead them to make a proper confession of their faith, and what that confession means. Discuss before them the whole question of organizing a church for effi-

cient work; what inside organizations should be promoted, and how far the pastor should work these; and when he should help others work them. They will specially need to be taught how to train their members for personal work. In my opinion, the Presbyterian ministry is weaker just at that point than at any other. Nearly all the Christian work done by our six hundred thousand church-members is either done or inspired by one-tenth of that number. Of the other nine-tenths, surely by proper effort two hundred thousand could be so trained as to be reasonably successful personal workers. A minister ought to make it a matter of conscience not to do anything in his church which he can persuade, command or entreat his people into doing. You can do nothing more useful for the students of this Seminary than to teach them how to bring out as skillful workers the whole membership of their churches.

Another branch of church work in modern times is the Sabbath-school. Do not omit instructing your students on that subject. Probably most of your students will have experience in this work, but instruction will still be necessary. Sabbath-schools will sometimes want to manage everything, and forget that the Session is in control of Presbyterian churches. So, also, oftentimes trustees assume all authority. Instruct your students on the whole money question. It is a humiliating fact that so many ministers have such low views of the obligation of personal honesty. Nothing more quickly cuts under that popular confidence which a minister ought to enjoy, than that in money matters he should be known as careless or untruthful or dishonest. Handle at large the whole financial problem as to the trustees, the deacons, the building committee, the boards and the pastor's salary. If the Lord saw fit to touch the matter of their support in his charge to both the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples, and Paul occupied so much space in two chapters of his Epistles to the Corinthians with it, for the ministry to omit it is not modesty but unfaithfulness. Every minister should count himself a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ, in behalf of his Kingdom, to solicit from Christ's people the fruits of their Master's

vineyard. He solicits not for himself, but for his Master, as represented in the great missionary enterprises of the Church. He may be reviled and cast out and killed, but he is not to complain. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," saith the Lord of the vineyard. Generally, however, the good Christian people will count it a joy to give of their substance to the Lord who hath redeemed them. In all this the minister will need wisdom and discretion.

But, thirdly, as you are a Professor of Practical Theology, make your students practice these instructions under your criticism. The medical student values very highly the privilege of hospital practice, under the eyes of the preceptor. Law students organize their moot courts, that they may prepare and try cases under the eyes of their teachers. The ideal education is that which combines theoretical education with the nearest approach to actual practice. In one of his revival meetings Mr. Moody took his place among the inquirers, and Dr. Plumer took the platform. These two acted the parts of inquirer and spiritual guide for the instruction of those about them. If it is proper—and who will doubt it?—for you to require your students to submit skeleton sermons and written prayers for your inspection, and to practice preaching for your criticism, why is it not just as proper for them to have meetings of a church session to receive members and talk over congregational matters, and meetings of presbytery to examine candidates, to inquire about the churches, to try judicial cases and admonish offenders. So shall they learn how to conduct such business, and you shall be able to correct their mistakes as to the functions of a presbytery. It would be an unquestionable means of grace for many a student to have one of his fellow students examine into his religious experience and his views in seeking the ministry. These young ministers will be much better prepared for serious illness and a death-bed, and for ministering to the sick and dying, if they come into your room and talk over these subjects as they suppose the dying think of them and as the ministers ought to speak to them. Tax your wits to invent methods to work these young men

into practicing their future work. They will not thank you for being easy with them. They are here for hard work, and will thank you for letting them make their share of mistakes here, where it does not make much difference, rather than leave them to make their blunders in the midst of humiliation and trouble. The Presbytery of Cincinnati, and the Synod of Ohio, and the General Assembly, ought to meet in this building every month, with these students as the members thereof. In this way they will become familiar with the Form of Government and Book of Discipline, and especially with the Rules for Judicatories.

Theoretical mathematics and theoretical chemistry are most interesting studies, but it is applied mathematics and applied chemistry that command the highest price in the world's market and are of most use to men. So theoretical theology is a most profound, interesting and inexhaustible study; but it is theology applied to the heart by the Spirit, and preaching applied under the direction of the Holy Ghost, which the Church wants of the ministry, and which the world most sorely needs at its hands.

In all this I have assumed your ample knowledge. I have assumed the piety and faith of your students, as well as of yourself; I have assumed your helplessness and theirs for the work to which you address yourselves; but I have also assumed the truth of God's promises, that his Holy Spirit shall supply all your need and theirs by his grace. What I have said proceeds on the truth of all this, and has touched only the practical outcome and work of this professorship of Practical Theology. I beg to assure you not only of my personal friendship, but also of the confidence and sympathy of the Trustees, and of all the ministers and Christians of this region. May God bless you always.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

BY THE

REV. WM. H. ROBERTS, D. D.

THE most expressive of all the terms employed in the Scriptures, to represent the relation which Christ sustains to his Church, is the one in which he is called "the Head of the body." The head is the seat of life, intelligence, volition, control; the body is a system of members harmoniously related each to the other, and all in communication with the head. From the head, further, through the agency of the mysterious bond which unites mind with matter, and along unseen channels, flows the power which silently, graciously and effectively controls the body. Fitting analogy this to set forth the nature of the influence and control of Christ over his Church. His relation to his people is of such a nature that it can be said, "Who is our life;" "Ye have the mind of Christ;" "He worketh in us both to will and to do;" "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." And the pathos of the figure deepens as we think upon the character of the divine energy, which, operating by the Holy Ghost, through the mystical union which unites Christ and the believer, exercises a control at once unseen and positive, silent and all-penetrating, strong yet tender, irresistible yet gracious, and the

harmony of whose efficient operations clearly evidences that,
* "He is the Head over all things to the Church."

The theme which we propose to consider is, the Headship of Christ as it affects the office, work and spirit of the Christian minister.

A discussion of this vital Christian doctrine, in its relation to the minister, involves attention primarily to certain cardinal factors.

First of these is, the supreme and peculiar authority of Jesus Christ. By virtue of his inherent divine nature Christ is Head over all things. In respect to power he is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. Where he is first there can be no second.

But Christ is not only the head over all things, by virtue of his divine nature, but also Head over all things to the Church, by virtue of his mediatorial work. It was as the divine mediator between God and man that he came into a saving and sovereign relation to a sinful world. Though "upholding all things by the word of his power," yet was it needful that he should by himself purge away sin ere he could "sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."† He secured upon the cross the right of his investiture as the king of redemption. The wood of the accursed tree is the symbol at once of the obligation to implicit obedience, which binds those who are not their own because they have been bought with a price, and of the peculiar authority over them of him who purchased them with his own blood. Christians are the property of Christ.

The second factor involves the statement of the particulars in which Christ exercises his supreme and peculiar authority over the Church. The particulars of the mediatorial sovereignty of Christ are determined by the needs of man. Man has lost the image of God in knowledge, righteousness and holiness. In spiritual relations he is ignorant, sinful, depraved. His needs are instruction, atonement, control. It is the office of a prophet to instruct, of a priest to make reconciliation for sin, of a king to rule. Christ executes the office of a prophet,

* Ephesians i. 22. † Hebrews i. 3.

“in his revealing to the Church in all ages the whole will of God;” of a priest, “in his once offering himself a sacrifice to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people, and in his continually making intercession for them;” of a king, “in his calling out of the world a people to himself, and giving them officers, laws and censures, by which he visibly governs them.”* Christ is the head over all things to his Church in instruction, worship and rule. His Headship is conterminous with his mediatorial work as Prophet, Priest and King.

The third factor is the existence in the Kingdom of Christ of a class of officers, called in our Standards bishops or pastors, given to the Church by her King, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the ministry of the word, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”† These officers many hold to be peculiarly the representatives of Christ in his kingdom. We so regard them; and further, believe that the Headship of Christ vitally affects the original and nature of their office, limits their powers and defines their duties.

Our subject, it may be here remarked with propriety, suggests the source of true unity between the main divisions of that department of instruction in this Theological Seminary, to the duties of which I have been called in the providence of God. Practical Theology, with all other theology, can be treated as Christocentric. However it may be defined, and whatever as a result it may be regarded as including, it does include the consideration of the office and work of the Christian minister. Further, in dealing theoretically or practically with the original, the powers and the duties of the ministry, the obligation to discover a principle of unity is urgent upon all thinkers, and it is believed that it will be found in the offices of Christ as the mediatorial Head of the Church. The office, powers and duty of the ministry, may be all placed in relation to the three particulars in which his Headship is made evident, viz.: instruction, worship and rule. The work of a professor of Practical Theology involves that these several ideas are to be treated from a homiletical, a liturgical and a governmental

* Larger Catechism, Questions 43, 44 and 45. † Ephesians iv. 12.

standpoint, thus giving rise to the departments of Homiletics, Liturgics and Church Government:—

The first, Homiletics dealing with the proclamation of divine truth by duly authorized persons.

The second, Liturgics dealing with the acceptable worship of God, both as to principles, persons, methods, forms and spirit.

The third, Church Government dealing with the principles controlling, and the duties involved in, the administration of the interests of the Kingdom of Christ, the care of souls, the direction of church work, the exercise of discipline, the right ordering of church affairs, the determination of questions of polity and the work of missions.

This triple order finds a counterpart in the subordinate standards of the Presbyterian churches: first, the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms as containing truth to be believed; second, the Directory, as indicating the principles, duty and particulars of true worship; third, the Form of Government and the Book of Discipline, as setting forth the nature, purposes and methods of the administration of government. And it finds both counterpart and warrant in the Prophetic, the Priestly and the Kingly offices of Christ. Without Christ, the Head, the office of the minister, whether viewed from the standpoint of theory or practice, from the professor's chair or from the pulpit, lacks unity, warrant and authority alike in its original, its powers and its duties.

I. THE OFFICE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

Consider first, therefore, the Headship of Christ as it affects the *office* of the Christian minister. There is general consent on the part of all claiming to be Christians to the truth that no man can make himself a minister. How, then, are ministers made? Not in theological seminaries, nor by presbyteries, for true ministers are "neither of men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ."* There is in this particular a common agreement among evangelical Christians. They all maintain that no man

* Galatians i. 1.

is in verity a minister of Christ who has not heard the Master's voice saying, "Follow thou me." The divine call, however, is but one element in the constituting a man a minister of Jesus Christ. Other elements enter necessarily into the question, one of which is, the act of formal investiture with the office. And the act of ordination, as to its meaning, has given rise to differences of view vital in their character, and affecting seriously the nature of the ministerial office.

Three views of ordination in general prevail, with modifications. One of these may be called the independent view, another the hierarchical, a third the evangelical.

The first, the *independent view*, in its extreme form, makes election by the members of a particular church an indispensable requisite to the ordination of a minister, and permits them, if the necessity arises, to set him apart to his office. This view, however, is less prevalent now than formerly, and confounds two different questions the one with the other, "What makes a minister?" with "Where shall a minister exercise his office?" We dismiss it from consideration, with the statement that it makes the people, the subjects of the Church-kingdom the source of authority therein, reduces the minister to the position of a church-member, and makes the Church to be governmentally what scripturally it is not, a pure democracy. The latter the Church can not be so long as Christ remains a prophetic and priestly King upon his throne.

The *hierarchical view* involves the following things: that the ministry is composed of three orders or classes, bishops, presbyters and deacons; that the bishops are successors of the apostles, and possess, miraculous gifts excepted, the same authority and power; that bishops alone are qualified to ordain themselves and other ministers; that this Episcopal ordination conveys a grace of orders; that this grace can be communicated only by a bishop; that the recipients of this grace are the one bond of union between Christ and his Church, and the sole channels through which the benefits of his death and life are communicated to men. According to this view the authority of church-officers, the Christian character of ministers and

churches, the efficacy of the sacraments, the salvation of souls, and the communication of divine grace in regeneration, justification and sanctification, are all dependent upon the acts of men. It teaches clearly that where there is no bishop, there is neither church, ministers, sacraments nor salvation. Episcopal ordination is the source of all authority, all power, all grace, to the Church in general, and, also, to the souls of men.

In confirmation of the accuracy of this representation of the hierarchical view, the following quotation is submitted from an authoritative Anglican work on the Church. The author, writing of the Presbyterians of Scotland, and of their rejection of Episcopacy, says: "All the temporal enactments and powers of the whole world could not cure this fault, nor render them a portion of the Church of Christ." "They and their generations are as the heathen; and though we may have reason to believe that many of their descendants are not obstinate in their errors, still it seems to me that we are not warranted in affirming absolutely that they can be saved."*

This view, in all that it involves, is not accepted by some Episcopal ministers. These, however, are most unfortunate in the company they keep. High-church views dominate in their Communion, and control both law and usage. The Protestant Episcopal Body never has received, and will not now receive, a minister from another Protestant Church, and accredit him as a minister of said Body, unless he be first received as a church-member, and then be reordained as a minister by one of their bishops. But in cases where Romish priests have applied to be received by that Body, so far as we have knowledge, they have never been reordained. According to the Protestant Episcopal Body, therefore, Romish ordination does confer upon its subjects a ministerial character which Protestant ministers do not possess, and for which reason the latter are not, and cannot be, recognized as Christian ministers by Episcopalian clergymen. Indeed, this hierarchical view is fundamental to the law and usage of all the prelatical Communion. Greek, Roman and Anglican ministers are controlled in conduct by it, and

* Palmer, "The Church," Vol. II.

can not logically avoid acceptance of its consequences—the denial of the Christian character of Protestant churches, ministers, sacraments and church-members. • Further, special attention has recently been called to this view by the proposition made by Protestant Episcopalians, to unite American Protestants in one Church, upon a basis involving the acceptance by non-Episcopal ministers of Episcopal ordination. But the acceptance of such ordination involves the acceptance of all that it involves, both practically and doctrinally. Concisely put, doctrinally it involves, manward, the claim on the part of the minister to be the sole channel of saving grace; Christward, that even the gracious power of the Redeemer may not operate unto salvation, except in and through a bishop. Ministerial power is made by it not derived, but absolute; not declarative, but operative. To the supreme question of a struggling soul, “What shall I do to be saved?” it answers by pointing, not to Christ, not even to the Church as some allege, but to a man. For the cardinal doctrine of the Scriptures, “By faith ye are saved,” it substitutes a belief in the saving power of an irresistible grace, resident in, controlled by and communicated through the hand of a prelatical bishop.

How will such an ordination, “actual” or “hypothetical,” commend itself to Presbyterian ministers and churches? Through the centuries, the Headship of Christ has been to them a centre of faith, love and devotion. Our spiritual fathers dared even to die, rather than consent to the alteration of one clause of Christ’s covenant or permit the abstraction of one jewel from his crown. Their heirs are invited, forsooth, to unite with *The Church* by accepting prelatical ordination. But this means, from the evangelical view-point, to dethrone Christ, change his truth, and transfer the crown, the symbol of his supreme authority, from his dear, thorn-pierced brow, for the adornment of the heads of fallible and sinful men. To the Episcopal invitation but one answer is possible, a courteous “Thank you!” followed by a resolute “No.” Loyalty not only to our historic past, but, above all, to Christ as the Head of the Church, forbids any other response.

Moreover, as we think on the prelatical claim and its attendant teachings, across the chasm of centuries separating between us and apostolic times, comes the voice of that apostle who "labored more abundantly than they all."* In Corinth, as in Galatia, he encountered opposition from those who strenuously denied his claim to be an apostle, and virtually upon the ground upon which is based, in the present, denial of the ministerial character of the great majority of the Christian ministers in the United States, not to speak of other countries. The scriptural evidence is clear, that Paul's opponents in Corinth asserted, that he had not been commissioned for his work by due human authority. Against this charge he appealed to the Corinthians, saying: "If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord."† Is the seal of the ministry, souls saved and saints edified? Then, indeed, does the Episcopal claim become as nothing, in the presence of the gracious dispensations of God, during the past century, toward the evangelical churches both in Great Britain and America. In the eighteenth century, the Anglican Church repelled from her Communion a body of fervent Christians called by her contemptuously, "Methodists." In the preceding century, she laid the heavy hand of persecution throughout Britain upon those whom her prelates called "Dissenters." To-day, the Methodists alone, in this land, outnumber the Anglicans seven to one; and "dissenters" in the English-speaking world have increased, in the period between 1700 and 1886, from about four to seventy per cent. of the total population. Assuredly, evangelical ministers, as they survey the multitudes whom God in Christ has committed to their charge, may exclaim: "If we be not ministers unto others, yet doubtless we are to you: for the seal of our ministry are ye in the Lord." Further, may they commend to the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, for their imitation, the example of certain apostles in Jerusalem, to whom Paul, fourteen years after his entrance on his ministerial labors, "communicated that gospel which he preached among the Gentiles."

* I Corinthians xv. 10. † I Corinthians ix. 2.

The record reads, "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship."* Whether, however, the hierarchical bishops possess the spirit of those apostles, whose successors they claim to be, is not, as yet, evident. Their proposed basis for the union of American Protestants would rather indicate that "Ephraim is joined to his idols."

The *evangelical view* of ordination, and, as a result, of the ministerial office, is based upon the scriptural statement that Christ having given gifts to men, gave to his Church—"some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the work of the ministry."† Apostles, prophets and evangelists were extraordinary officers, whose functions have long since ceased. Pastors and teachers continue to the present, are as much the gifts of Christ to the Church in this as in any other age, and are in the Scriptures called "ambassadors for Christ," "ministers of Christ," "ministers of the word." It is also believed that their duties are prescribed and their powers defined by his prerogatives. The latter statement is based upon the following considerations.

The duties of pastors or teachers relate to instruction, worship and rule. These three things also indicate the sphere of the exercise of the prerogatives of Christ as Prophet, Priest and King. The work of Christ as Mediator is, therefore, continuous with the work entrusted to his ambassadors. In how far, then, does Christ's exercise of his three offices define and limit the authority of his ambassadors? The answer to this question, will determine the nature both of the act of ordination and of the ministerial office.

Think first, then, in this connection, upon the prophetic office. This office, as a means for the revelation of the will of God to man, has long ceased to exist in the Church. The need for it, as an extraordinary office, came to an end when the Canon of Scripture was closed. In the Bible, Christ has given

* Galatians ii. 9. † Ephesians iv. 11, 12.

to his Church the only *rule of faith*, he is now the sole Prophet of his people. Such being the case, ministers can not be what the prophets of old were—infallible teachers. Their work is limited, by Christ's sole exercise of the prophetic office, to the reverent reception of the Scriptures as the Word of God, and the faithful ministration of instruction in connection therewith, either by preaching or teaching.

Take next the priestly office. Like the prophetic, the priestly office has ceased to be exercised by men. The name priest nowhere occurs in the New Testament as the designation of a Christian church-officer. Priests there were under the Old Testament Dispensation, who offered sacrifices for the sins of the people; but priests and sacrifices were both typical of Christ, and both ceased to be of value with his sacrificial death upon Calvary. Because Christ has appeared "once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," therefore all human priesthood has come to an end. The sole exercise by Christ of the priestly office, necessitates that those who are his representatives, in connection with the worship of God, shall offer neither sacrifice for sin, nor assume any priestly authority, nor claim the ministration of grace. They possess no priestly prerogatives. As they stand in the great congregation, they are simply leaders of the people in worship—pointing to Christ as the all sufficient atonement for sin, the only prevailing intercessor with God, the one source from which divine grace can flow into weak and sinful souls.

Consider, further, the kingly office. None but the man of sin has dared to sit, as God, in the temple of God. And, whatever encroachments others than he may have made on Christ's prerogatives, it suffices to point out that the exercise by Christ of his crown-rights limits the powers of his ambassadors, in such wise, that they can not regard themselves, in any particular, as lords over God's heritage. Because Christ is King, and has given to men, in the Scriptures, a *rule of practice* as well as a rule of faith, therefore, neither ministers nor churches, of themselves, can promulgate new terms of church membership or of communion, or exercise aught of legislative power. Their power

is declarative solely, of laws already existent and truths declared by the authority of the mediatorial King.

We reach, then, the following conclusions in relation to the office of the Christian minister: that those who occupy it are Christ's representatives, his ambassadors to men; that its duties are indicated by the particulars in which he exercises his mediatorial authority—instruction, worship and rule; that his Headship as Prophet, Priest and King makes the power of the minister not absolute, but relative, not operative and legislative, but declarative. The Christian minister is not a mediator between God and man. He is neither an infallible teacher, nor a priest to forgive sin and dispense grace, nor a ruler with an inherent authority. In his office and work he is simply the servant of Christ, bound to carry out the supreme will of the Head of the Church in all matters of faith, worship and rule.

Again, inasmuch as the nature of the ministerial office is relative and representative, the supreme element in the making one a minister is the divine call. No man should be permitted to become a candidate for that office, which is representative of Christ, unless he can unequivocally declare that he believes himself called thereto by the Spirit of God.

Moreover, it follows that the nature of the ministerial office, as relative and representative, gives a like character to the act of ordination. That act is simply the outward and public recognition of a private and inward call given to a man, through the Holy Ghost, to be a minister of Christ. The laying on of the hands of ministers in the presbytery, conveys no grace and confers no mediatorial power. Whatever of efficacy ministerial ordination may have Christward, depends upon the state of the heart of the person ordained; from the human side, it is but the act of formal investiture with an office. And while the Church has the right, through her officers, to judge of ministerial qualifications; while the members of particular churches can decide the question whether a minister shall exercise his office in a pastoral relation; yet these things are incidental, not fundamental. The relation of church-officers other than ministers, and of church-members, to the ministerial office, is

simply in the line of approval of qualifications. To the true minister, Christ is all in all; for from him come the call, commission, authority, grace according to the need, the indication of what duty is, and where and how it is to be performed. The Christian minister is, in a marked sense, the ambassador of Christ.

The ambassadorial character of the minister is an aid to the decision of a question at present before the Church, that of the nature and functions of the office of ruling elder, as distinct from the office of the Christian minister. We do not propose to discuss the Ruling-Elder-Moderator Overture. Further, the office of the ruling elder is deservedly in high esteem, and its value and importance to the churches can not be too much emphasized. But certain claims have been made for that office, and in connection with the Overture referred to, which seem to us to be non-scriptural as well as extra-constitutional. We present therefore, in brief form, what we think to be the truth concerning the offices respectively of the ruling elder and the ministerial elder, in order to show the relation of the *minister, as an elder*, to the authority of Jesus Christ as sole King in his Church.

That ruling elders fill an ancient and honorable office in the Church of God, is clearly shown in the Scriptures. We find them mentioned in Mosaic times, and then acting, whatever their authority, as representatives of the people. Reference to Jewish writers will show that they exercised the same office in the synagogue, and in the same representative capacity. Naturally, we find mention made of them in the New Testament, and, again, in connection with rule in the house of God. Our own Church, in her Form of Government, speaks of them as one of the three classes of ordained and permanent officers in the Church, and distinctly calls them, in accordance with the most ancient usage, representatives of the people.

There are persons who, in all sincerity, hold views opposed to those set forth in this matter in our Form of Government. Church-officers they maintain are only of two classes, elders and deacons; and elders are of two sorts, teaching elders and

ruling elders. It is also insisted that the latter distinction did not prevail in the Apostolic Church, and that a return to her practice would give to all elders, the right to preach and to lead in worship, as well as to rule. In short, it is claimed that the designation by our Standards of ordained church-officers as of three classes, pastors, ruling elders and deacons, is unwarranted because non-scriptural.

Let us appeal, therefore, to the supreme authority in practice as well as in faith. As already indicated, the Scriptures evidence that the function of elders in the Old Testament Church was that of rule, and that they were the representatives of the people. It is clear, also, that they were neither prophets nor priests. Where in the New Testament is there evidence that their functions were so enlarged, that they could add to the function of rule those functions relating to instruction and worship. The references further to the office in the New Testament are few, and are directly capable of an interpretation limited to oversight and ordinary Christian duty, or to ministerial elders. In confirmation of this view we lay stress upon the fact that nowhere in the Scriptures is it said that Christ gave elders, in the same sense in which he is said to have given pastors and teachers, neither that he gave elders "for the ministry of the word," nor that he commissioned them as his ambassadors. Moreover, Timothy, who is never called an elder, but always a minister, an evangelist and a man of God, was charged by Paul "to put the brethren in remembrance, as a good minister of Jesus Christ,"* of the qualifications of the elder's office. Timothy then, as a minister, must have received authority to act in the ordination of elders in like manner as Presbyterian ministers do at present, for in matters of rule power goes hand in hand with responsibility. Again, Titus, who also is never called an elder, "ordained elders in every city,"† by virtue of an authority delegated by the apostle Paul. How could Paul delegate an authority which he did not possess? or, how could Titus be commissioned to ordain elders unless he was himself a ruler as well as a preacher, and as a ruler rep-

* 1 Timothy iv. 6. † Titus i. 5.

representative of the only source of authority in the Church, Christ the King? Further, the peculiar case of Peter, who, being an apostle, yet calls himself an elder,* casts light upon the question at issue. Was Peter, as an elder, a representative of the people? Was he ordained by Paul or Titus to the oversight of some particular church? The very supposition is an absurdity. But the fact of his use of the term, as expressive of a relation in which he stood to the Church as a ruler, is suggestive of the prevalent usage among primitive Christians. We maintain that Scripture indicates that the Apostolic Church had, as our own has, rulers who, while they possessed in common the administrative function, yet differed in the origin of their authority, some of them as rulers being representative of the interests of Christ in his Kingdom, others being representatives of the people. That such a distinction prevailed, is also shown by the fact that Timothy was ordained by a presbytery, † *i. e.*, by a number of elders gathered in formal session, for the transaction of ecclesiastical affairs, Paul it is likely being himself present; while Titus, who belonged to the same class of rulers with Timothy, as already stated, received power independently of any presbytery, to ordain elders in every city. Two sorts of ordination, one by a presbytery, the other by an individual, indicate two classes of rulers. This view is further borne out by the passage in Timothy which speaks of one class of elders as ruling well, and also laboring in the word and doctrine.‡ And this view seems to be in harmony, not only with Old Testament and Apostolic usage, but also with the exercise by Christ in his Kingdom of his Headship as Prophet, Priest and King.

Because Christ is King, therefore, do ministers rule in the Church. They are, as the Westminster divines declared, officers of the Church Universal; not like ruling elders, officers of a particular church.|| Particular churches, strictly speaking, have but two classes of officers, ruling elders and deacons; it is the Church in general which possesses now, as in the Apostolic

* I Peter v. 1. † I Timothy iv. 14. ‡ I Timothy v. 17.

|| See "The Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry," London, 1654.

age, the third class, viz. : ministers. Further, that ministers are preachers as well as presbyters or elders, does not imply that all who bear the name of elder ought to preach, any more than because Peter called himself an elder, therefore, all elders in the Primitive Church had a right to the office and work of an apostle. The term elder, as indicative of an office, implies that one is a ruler, and nothing more. Elders as elders, whether they be ministerial elders or ruling elders, have not, because they are elders, the right to preach or to administer the sacraments. The function of the minister in relation to instruction and worship, is absolutely distinct from his function in relation to rule. He is not what some persons would have us believe, simply an elder, to whom, for convenience' sake, *men* have assigned the work of preaching the gospel. As a preacher, his work from the beginning, has been assigned to him by the Church's King. The minister is a presbyter or elder, and he is in addition a leader in worship and a preacher. In all his work further is he the ambassador of Christ the Head. Neither in Scripture, in the law of the Church, nor, above all, in the Headship of Christ, is there a warrant for the exercise by those elders who are representatives of the people, of any other function than that of rule conjointly with ministers. Only those elders who are also ambassadors for Christ can administer the sacraments or "preach the word;" and they alone, also, because they are, as rulers, representative of the Head of the Church, can publicly pronounce against offenders sentences of suspension or of excommunication.

The conclusions thus reached are not only in harmony with the practice of our own Church, but also of the Church of Scotland. We quote from the Second Scotch Book of Discipline, Chapter VI., "Of Elders," Sections 1, 2 and 9: "When it [the name of elder] is the name of an office, sometimes it is taken largely, comprehending as well the pastors and doctors, as them who are called seniors or elders." "It is not necessary that all elders be also teachers of the word, albeit the *chief* ought to be such, and such as are worthy of double honor." "Their principal office is to hold assemblies with the

pastors and doctors, who are also of their number." We quote also Chapter IV., "Of Pastors," Sections 7, 8 and 12: "Unto the pastors only appertains the administration of the sacraments, in like manner as the administration of the word." "It appertains by the same reason to the pastors to pray for the people." "And generally all public denunciations that are to be made in the kirk before the congregation, concerning the ecclesiastical affairs, belong to the office of a minister; for he is a messenger and herald betwixt God and the people in all these affairs." If pastors are not elders, and, in addition, preachers and leaders in worship, then for three centuries have Scotch Presbyterians been mistaken in their interpretation of the Scriptures. Then also, is the statement made in Chapter IV. of our Form of Government untrue, "The pastoral office is the *first* in the Church, both for dignity and usefulness." But we believe this statement to be the truth, and upon the authority of the Word of God.

II. THE WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

Consider, next, the Headship of Christ as it affects *the work* of the Christian minister. We notice only matters of general and present interest.

First, think of the *minister* in the character of an *authoritative instructor* in divine truth. In order to clearness of thought in this connection, we here remark that Christ's prophetic office was exercised under the Old as well as the New Dispensation. In the New Testament it is affirmed that prophets searched to know "what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." The prophets, it would appear, in their work performed a double function. In their relation to Christ they revealed truth, in their relation to men they proclaimed truth and sought to interpret it. As representatives of Christ they were preachers as well as prophets, and, therefore, we have warrant for the belief that the essential element in the work, alike of ancient prophet and modern preacher, was and is instruction in divine

truth. Never has Christ, in any age, been unrepresented by authoritative teachers of the truth revealed through his Spirit to men. So that the Christian minister stands in that long line of servants of Christ, who have been in all ages the proclaimers and interpreters of his truth—a line which eclipses in antiquity all prelatic pretensions, and runs back to Noah the “preacher of righteousness,” and Enoch who prophesied, being the seventh from Adam. True ministers, however, need no succession, apostolic or otherwise, to warrant their authority as teachers. He who sends them forth gives them both their commission and their message. The living Head of the Church, putting to one side prophet, apostle and bishop, speaks to each of his true servants saying, “All power is given unto me in heaven and earth; therefore, go teach.”

Teaching in the name and by the authority of Christ, the Christian minister is to give heed to the source, the spirit and the method of his instruction. His representative character and the declarative power which he possesses both imply obligation in these particulars.

Because the Christian minister is Christ's representative, therefore the one source of the truth which he teaches is the will of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. The Bible is, of necessity, his text-book and guide-book. He should, therefore, be familiar with it from its beginning to its end, for it contains all the various elements of divine truth, in such relations, proportions and applications as are needed for his guidance in the discharge of his duties. Upon its pages human nature is delineated as it lies before the eyes of God; sin described in its particulars with unerring accuracy; the things which men must needs know in connection with salvation and duty, detailed by an omniscient knowledge transfused with infinite love. Further, the servants of Christ should study carefully his revealed will, not only for the purposes of the pulpit, but also as it bears upon their whole life and work. It contains not only the things already indicated, but, in addition, the commission of ministers, the specifications of the work entrusted to them, minute directions as to conduct, and a varied narrative of ministerial ex-

periences, the life of the Great Teacher included. It is a notable fact that the Bible is largely a record of the lives of the servants of God, and that a considerable portion of the New Testament is intended primarily for ministers. More attention, therefore, should be given to it from this viewpoint, both in pastors' studies and in theological seminaries.

Next to thorough familiarity with the Bible, the minister's representative character involves constant recognition of it, in all his instruction, as the infallible Word of God. To the minister it must be peculiarly the only rule of faith and practice. Its themes must be his themes, its spirit his spirit. In preaching and conduct alike, the evidence must be clear that he distinctly realizes that it is not himself or his utterances, but THE BOOK, which is clothed with the authority of Christ. Without this feeling there will be a lack of power in all the efforts which he puts forth. With it he will experience a truth a thousand times illustrated, that the world and the Church alike honor, not the man with mere opinions, but the man with convictions. One man with convictions is worth a score of men with opinions. And the need of the Church and the world is ever this, preachers through whose preaching runs, the energy of an unwavering faith in the absolute truth of God's Word written.

Having this conviction of the infallibility of the Scriptures deep-grounded in his mind and heart, the Christian minister will never neglect the teaching and preaching of the whole truth of God. He can not be true to his Lord unless he delivers his entire message. Certain forms of truth seem, at times, to be unpopular. For instance, there is at present opposition in some quarters to doctrinal preaching. The claim is made that the age has outgrown doctrine, and we have even heard of a professor in a theological seminary who advised his students saying, "Preach Christ, never mind the doctrines." The main difficulty, however, in connection with this opposition to doctrinal preaching would appear to be, a failure rightly to appreciate what a doctrine is. A religious doctrine may be defined, as a clearly thought and aptly worded statement of a

Scripture truth, with due recognition of Christ as its source. Men, therefore, can outgrow doctrine in two ways only, either by becoming irreligious or by ceasing to be clear-headed. And as to separating between Christ and doctrine, the thing is an impossibility. Christ is the heart of Christian doctrine, and Christian doctrine is the body of truth respecting Christ. Many even of our Lord's direct utterances while on earth are simple, clear statements of doctrine. Further, an apostle declares Scripture to be profitable for doctrine, and seems to have written out a creed or catechism for the guidance of the young, for Paul advised Timothy to "hold fast the form of sound words which he had heard of him." With the injunctions and examples of Christ and Paul before them, Christian ministers should preach doctrine; preach it stately, clearly, interpenetrated with the love of Christ for souls, confidently expecting as they so do, the attainment of one object of the gift of the ministry to the Church, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."* Doctrinal preaching and doctrinal standards are an incalculable blessing to a world ever disquieted by mental and spiritual unrest.

Further, it is obligatory on the minister, in his representative character, to insist that others shall teach only the truth, and that in the teaching of the truth a right spirit be manifested and correct methods adopted. This statement does not involve, however, the cultivation of a polemic temper on the part of the servant of Christ. The spirit of strife is not in accord with the instructions of the Church's Lord. The obligation which is here emphasized, has relation chiefly to that large sphere of usefulness, in connection with religious instruction, which Christ has opened by his providence, in these days, to his servants. Ministers have duties and responsibilities in relation to Sabbath-schools. The control of the character of

* Ephesians iv. 14-15.

the teaching therein is their peculiar province. If much of Sabbath-school instruction is meagre, unsatisfactory, it may be non-scriptural; if the spirit of the institution itself in some instances is more that of a place of amusement than of a school of Christ, the responsibility therefor lies chiefly upon ministers. They are in duty bound to see that, this great feature of modern church-life shall be controlled and utilized, for the growth of the scholars in the grace and knowledge of Christ. To this end care should be taken to instruct those who look forward to the ministry, in the art as well as in the substance of teaching. Christian pedagogics should be taught in every theological seminary. The one difficulty experienced by young ministers as they enter upon their work, the one hindrance to the usefulness of many preachers who have been for years pastors, is this; a lack of knowledge of the art of imparting to others what they have themselves received. How far this lack may be remedied can not at present be clearly indicated. It suffices to point out the need. Those who are to be teachers of the teachers, in churches and in Sabbath-schools, should certainly themselves know something, not only as to the nature of the truth which should be taught, but also as to the methods by which it may be best imparted.

Consider, next, the Headship of Christ as it affects the work of the Christian *minister as a leader in the worship of God.*

Because Christ is the only Priest of his people, therefore it is the duty of the Christian minister, as Christ's representative in relation to worship, resolutely to oppose in practice and teaching, that sacerdotalism which has been the curse of the Church in every age. Within more than one body called Christian, persons claiming to be priests officiate in the worship of God. They arrogate to themselves not a declarative but an authoritative power. Whatever the Church which they serve, substantially are they characterized, by a common claim to mediate efficaciously between God and man. And the claim has resulted in three evils, against which evangelical ministers are to present a vigorous and continuous protest, viz.: compulsory liturgies, the confessional and the sacrifice of the mass.

The evangelical position in relation to these things is widely misunderstood. There seems to be an impression in many quarters, that the evangelical denominations oppose them upon mere arbitrary grounds, as matters of taste or opinion. This view fails to grasp the true source and spirit of the opposition to them. To Christians of an evangelical temper, the things to which we refer are not matters of taste or of opinion, but of deep-seated conviction; and they think of them not in relation to themselves, but in relation to Christ and the souls of men. Because they believe that nothing is to come between the soul and Christ, therefore, do many ministers resolutely discountenance the use in the churches of compulsory liturgies. Quite as much as others may they desire to use correct literary forms in public worship, and far more than ritualists do they have opportunity to put their desire into practice. Worship, however, it is to be remembered, is not to any appreciable extent a matter of grammar or rhetoric. It is the aspiration of the soul of man toward God through Christ, in the adoration of his perfections and in the supplication of his blessing. And ritualists do appear practically to teach, that the free human spirit can not draw nigh to the infinite Father unless fettered by liturgies; and that God can not be properly adored or his favor secured except through a prayer-book. Views with such tendencies, are not loyalty to him who ever liveth to make intercession for his people. And they who are his representatives, should ever keep unbarred by men, the way of access to the throne of grace.

Especially are ministers in defense of the priesthood of Christ, to oppose the confessional and the mass. In these things a direct assault is made upon the mediatorial work of the Redeemer. Whatever plea may be made for a confessional, its practical effect is to teach that men, as mediators between God and man, can forgive sins—a position and power which no apostle ever claimed or exercised. And as to the sacrifice of the mass, no terms are strong enough to express the condemnation which it deserves. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in the simple form of Christ's appointment, is the highest priv-

ilege of the believer, and the most exalted act in the worship of God. But the Church of Rome has so grievously corrupted this high and holy ordinance, that we doubt if her administration of it can be regarded in any particular as Christian. Statedly do her priests claim to change at the altar bread into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, and offer the whole Christ present in the Eucharist, a true propitiatory sacrifice by which God is appeased. Thus doing they repeatedly crucify afresh the Son of God; they teach that his sacrifice offered upon Calvary needs additional propitiatory sacrifices for the remission of the sins of men; and in the claim of the stupendous power to change a wafer, not into the likeness of God, but into God, they at least make themselves liable to the charge contained in our Standards of being idolaters. Such glaring perversions of truth, in connection with the satisfaction for sin offered once for all by Christ upon the cross, need explicit statement and unmistakable rebuke. And a course of sermons against Romanism can only result in good. One minister located in a community where Romanists are numerous, and courageous in his exposure of their errors, has for years received at well-nigh every sacramental season, converts from the Romish Body. The power and influence of the False Church, the errors of whose doctrines he exposes, are but an added test of his loyalty to Christ as the priestly Head of his people.

Again, the minister as the representative of Christ in his priestly office, should clearly bear unceasing witness, to the all-important character of the great Christian doctrine of the Atonement. This doctrine is fundamental to the Headship of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King. It is the one thing which makes Christianity Christian. It is that grand peculiarity of the Gospel, which was of old a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks. Error in connection with it saps the whole of religion. Romanists add human merit to Christ's, and so make the Atonement of partial efficacy. Socinians deny any need of satisfaction for sin, and make Christ a mere man. Infidels, regarding virtue as dependent upon circumstances,

reject Christianity absolutely. To fullness of Christian faith, power of Christian preaching, and efficacy of Christian worship, the belief is essential that Christ "his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."* And this truth Christian ministers are commissioned, not only to preach, but to set forth by visible signs. Statedly do they administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, officiating at a table upon which are seen emblems which not only bring Christ to remembrance, but also in connection with which his death is to be shown till he come.† The broken bread and the poured out wine, emblematic of the broken body and the shed blood of the Lord, are the divine emphasis upon the absolute necessity to Christian faith, Christian life and the Christian Church of the satisfaction for sin made upon the cross. Christian ministers are, therefore, in preaching and worship alike, to place repeated stress upon Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice. The sacrament which by his authority they administer, is a part of their commission, for upon it in letters of blood the words are written, "Shew forth the Lord's death till he come." This command they can fulfill, only by so preaching and so praying, that the cry shall be heard from unnumbered lips, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" that all who worship shall realize that they have access unto the Father, boldness to enter into the holiest, alone by the blood of Jesus; that all those who profess the Saviour's name shall clearly discern the Lord's body in its supreme relation to human welfare for both time and eternity; and that there may come upon every Christian life the forceful impact of the constraining love of Jesus Christ.

We confess to deep feeling in this matter of which we now treat. There is in some portions of the Church, a tendency on the part of ministers to abstain from the preaching of the Cross, and to prayer which is feebly expressive of the facts of sin and salvation. "For this cause many are weak and sickly, and many sleep."‡ There is further a frequently expressed desire, on the part of earnest and true ministers, for an increase in the devotional spirit of the Church. They feel that there is

*1 Peter ii. 24. †1 Corinthians xi. 26. ‡1 Corinthians xi. 30.

a lack in this particular, and that too much is made of the merely intellectual in connection with public worship and Christian life. But liturgies are no remedy for the lack thus pointed out. The letter of forms can not supply the spirit which is life. Increased sense of obligation to and dependence upon Christ, can alone bring increase of devotion. And therefore, are ministers specially charged in all preaching, in all prayer, in all praise, above all, in that highest act of Christian worship, the administration of the Lord's Supper, so to set forth Christ the living Head, that waiting souls shall feel as they look upon him their deepest needs, see in him their supreme desire, receive of his salvation and of his life, and be poured forth in adoring praise of him who ever liveth to make intercession for them. Only as before the eyes of men, Jesus Christ is evidently set forth crucified among them, can public services rise to the height of true worship. Yea, so only can Christian life become here what it is hereafter to be, an unending song of praise to him who loved us and gave himself for us.

Christian ministers are, therefore, to give close attention to the cultivation of a devotional temper in themselves and others. In the words of the "Directory for Worship," they are "to endeavor to acquire both the spirit and gift of prayer," and "are to be careful not to make their sermons so long as to interfere with or exclude the more important duties of praise and prayer."* And inasmuch as the essence of religion is not intellectualism, but devotion—alike in the conduct of public worship and of the pastoral life—are they ever by teaching, prayer and example to increase the sense of personal obligation to Jesus Christ. That minister alone lives up to the measure of the commission entrusted to him; alone is a true leader in the worship of the Church, who so impresses Christ upon men and women that, in the Church and out of it, it can be said, Christ liveth in them.

We take up briefly the kingly office of Christ, as it affects the work of the Christian *minister as a ruler*. In the kingly, as in his other mediatorial offices, Christ has always been the

*Directory for Worship, Chapter VII. Section 4.

Head of his Church. Lawgivers, judges and kings of the Theocratic Kingdom, were but types of him whose scepter sways from Paradise lost to Paradise regained. And as under the Old Testament dispensation there were persons who were representative of him in rule, as well as in instruction and worship; so also, as we have seen, there are such representative persons under the New Testament dispensation. Because Christ is Head of his Church in all matters of rule, therefore, are his ambassadors to exercise authority as rulers.

Any exhaustive treatment of the duty of ministers, in relation to the administration of the affairs of the Church kingdom, conjointly with the ruling elders, would be at this time an impossibility. As under the other heads of discussion, certain particulars of duty which seem to need present attention are indicated.

Ministers should see to it, as one particular of duty, that applicants for church-membership, prior to their appearance before the Session, are in a mental and spiritual condition to give satisfactory proof of their knowledge and piety. Many churches suffer grievously from neglect in this matter, and to this neglect is to be largely attributed the fact that, during the past five years, our own Church has lost from her membership very many persons by causes other than death. The way into the Church is not as Christ commanded that it should be, a narrow way. There seems to be in many quarters, more of a desire for temporary increase in numbers, than for a strong Christian character in converts.

Again, ministers are specially charged with the duty of caring for those whom our Standards call young Christians. This duty is indicated by Christ in the special command, "Feed my lambs," and the command implies a responsibility for the children of believers, incumbent upon ministers as well as upon parents. Church officers, therefore, are to deal with the children of the Church as the lambs of the flock, and to impress upon them that they are in the visible Church. "And, when they come to years of discretion, if they be free from scandal, appear sober and steady, and to have sufficient knowledge to

discern the Lord's body," they are to inform them that "it is their duty and their privilege to come to the Lord's Supper."* The question which really confronts young Christians at the period of discretion is not, Will you join the visible Church? but Will you go out of it? In relation to this whole matter there is a widespread, but not a growing neglect.

Further, the minister is to bring the power of Christ to bear upon all questions vital to the social interests of men. The Master's warning in this particular is, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."† A gospel which fails to reach, influence and benefit the masses, as early Christianity did, as English Methodism did, is salt which has lost its savor. The most serious Christian problems of the day are in our great cities, and only the gospel which has savor, can be of any value in relation to the present widespread social fermentation. It is obedience to God which can alone produce obedience to law.

Especially is the minister to cultivate the missionary spirit in himself and in others. He is to press home upon every opportune occasion the fact that, the one work to which Christ summons all who bear his name is, the work of extending his Kingdom in the earth. "Missions are the chief end of the Christian Church;" and the possession of a missionary spirit is the best measure of a Christian's growth, toward the stature of the fullness of Christ. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the internal prosperity of Christian churches, largely depends on the measure of their faithfulness in this particular. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." May God grant that Christian churches and ministers everywhere may be filled with the Spirit, and so pray, give and labor, that the hour may be hastened when every tongue shall confess and every knee shall bow to Christ as Lord of all.

III. THE SPIRIT OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

We close with thoughts expressive of *the spirit* which should

* Directory for Worship, Chapter X., Section I. † Matthew v. 13.

characterize the Christian minister, in the exercise of his office as a representative of Christ.

The spirit of the Christian minister should be a spirit of *humility*, remembering his responsibilities. Many persons make much of the dignity of the ministerial office, and it certainly has a high and peculiar dignity, impressing itself strongly upon the minds of men. A minister applied at one time to Andrew Jackson for a political office. "What is your present calling, sir?" said the President. "I am a Christian minister, sir," was the reply. "A minister!" exclaimed the President, "a minister! You hold, sir, a higher commission than any I can give you;" and then dismissed the applicant. Whatever of dignity, however, the ministerial office possesses, is, after all, but a dim reflection of the King in his glory. The true minister of Jesus Christ will ever cherish an humble spirit, thinking not so much of the exalted character of his office, as of his privileges therein, and amid his varied labors will he ever say to himself like Archibald Hodge—

"I am but a poor sinner, and nothing at all,
And Jesus Christ is all in all."

He will dwell chiefly upon his responsibilities, daily girded by a growing sense of their weight to acquit himself as a workman not needing to be ashamed.

The true minister will further cherish, a spirit of *fellowship* toward all his brethren in the ministry. The minister has a relation, often unheeded, to the unity of the Church. In the year 1654, the Provincial Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England published a notable book entitled, "The Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry." We quote from it as follows: "But now we say that the whole Church of Christ throughout the world is but one; and that every minister has a relation to this Church Catholic." This relation of the minister to the Church Universal, the New Testament sets forth by applying to ministers terms such as, ministers of God, ministers of Christ, ministers of the New Testament, but never any term indicative of relation to a party or a sect. Ministers stand in relation primarily, not to any church or denomination, but to

Jesus Christ. By virtue of their right of free choice, they do, in the exercise of their office, circumscribe themselves within the limits of denominational standards, as to matters of faith, worship and polity. None of these limitations, however, can destroy the fact that they are first and always representatives and servants of him who is the Head of the whole Church. They are to be the visible signs to the world of the Church's unity in her living Head. The Christian unity so greatly desired by many persons is to be attained, not by force of arms or legislation, leaving men "convinced against their will, and of the same opinion still"; nor by the concentration of all Christian bodies into one great body, to result, as of old, in corruption both in faith and practice; but through the cordial recognition by Christian ministers generally of their true and common character as representatives of Jesus Christ. The way to Church Union lies in ministerial recognition. Ever then, are ministers to labor for this true unity, living in its spirit, and holding out to all who are servants of Christ, that right hand of fellowship which James, Peter and John gave to Paul. From the clasp of the hand of that loving fellowship, one minister may go to a distant field, as Paul to the Gentiles; another may remain in a home field, as James at Jerusalem; but whatever denominational name they may bear, still are they servants of one Lord, and virtually will they maintain one faith and minister the same sacraments.

Finally, the minister's spirit is to be, one of steadfast allegiance and passionate *devotion* to the person of Jesus Christ. We approve heartily of that loyalty to conviction, which leads ministers in the churches with which God has cast their lot, to be true to denominational creeds, politics and interests. This course simple manhood requires and commends. But such loyalty is not the supreme demand made upon Christian ministers. They are to feel within themselves the power of a personal and omnipotent will, the overcoming strength of a masterful personal love. We illustrate our meaning by reference to the history of the Church. To what, think you, is to be attributed the marvelous victories achieved by Christianity

in the early ages? What made the Primitive Christian Church the power it was in the world? Was it devotion to a polity, or attachment to a liturgy, or the advocacy of a creed? Was it the culture of philosophies, or the practice of the virtues? Was it any one of these things which inspired the disciples of the olden time fearlessly to face trial, persecution and martyrdom? Let us open our eyes to the facts in the case. What moved them as one, in every generation, was a passionate attachment stronger than life, to the person of Jesus Christ. A maiden of Syracuse, as she looked upon her bleeding body mutilated by the persecutor's knife, calmly said, "I shall not be less beautiful in the eyes of my heavenly Bridegroom." The might of the love which ruled in her heart, the members of the Early Church felt almost without exception. They heard the call of Christ's tender and masterful voice, saying, "Follow me," and they leapt instantly and joyfully to labor, conflict and death. He had bidden them to disciple all nations, and his command was more potent than the terrors of the sword, the stake and the cross. No persecutions were too severe to be borne, no deaths too terrible to be endured, if in them they could evidence their obedience and affection to him, whom unseen, they yet loved. And when at last the hour of triumph came, and heathenism withdrew defeated from the field, the real conqueror was neither apostle, evangelist, confessor, nor martyr, not even the Primitive Church as a whole! the name of the victor in that long struggle of three centuries, was heard in the death-cry of the last of pagan emperors, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilæan!"

And does not the Galilæan conquer still? Shall he not turn and overturn until he reigns whose right it is? Is he not still passionately loved? Are there not those now who can say with Paul, "I count not my life dear unto myself," and within whom reigns supreme the love of Christ which passeth knowledge? Christians, it is earnestly declared, long for a renewal of the triumphs of the days of old. Let them realize, then, the truth, that the victories of the early age can be repeated only by a revival of its passionate personal devotion.

The spiritual conquest of the world, like the conquest of the Roman Empire, is to be achieved alone by the power of a personal love for a personal Christ. To Christian ministers, as they long for success in their work; to Christians generally, as they live and labor in the hope of the salvation of a perishing world; we commend as the key-note of all effort and the assurance of victory, the motto of Zinzendorf,

“I HAVE BUT ONE PASSION, IT IS HE.”

I close with words expressive of my obligations and responsibilities.

To the respected members of the Board of Trustees of this venerable Seminary of sacred learning, who have elected me to the responsible office of Professor of Practical Theology, I tender my sincere thanks. To the professors of this Institution I also owe public recognition of the cordial unanimity with which they seconded the call of the Trustees, and of the sympathetic and affectionate regard with which they have sustained me thus far in my labors. I accept the office with a feeling of my entire dependence upon Christ for success therein. Following in the footsteps of one who was distinguished as a preacher, eminent as a pastor, highly qualified by natural gifts and by divine grace for the position he so long filled with great ability, and whose sudden death the whole Church yet mourns, I can but feel the grave responsibilities which have been laid upon me. May God make this Institution, by the blessing of the Divine Spirit, more and more a means for the dissemination among men, of the knowledge of him who is the way, the truth and the life; and may he, the Head of the Church, communicate to us all, as members of his body, life, grace and power, according to the need.

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